GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PLANNING
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3162
ANSWERED ON:21.03.2007
BPL FAMILIES IN ASSAM
Sarma Dr. Arun Kumar

Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:

(a) number of BPL families in the country and their percentage to the total population. State- wise;

(b) special benefits being extended to BPL families and envisaged for future implementation for their sustenance as well as upliftment;

(c) whether the Union Government is aware of the large scale discrepancies in preparing the list of BPL families in certain districts of Assam by exclusion of bona-fide families and by inclusion of families who do not qualify the criteria; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by the Government to rectify the position?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN)

(a): The Ministry of Rural Development provided financial and technical assistance to the States and UTs to conduct the BPL Census in the beginning of a Five Year Plan to identify the BPL families in the rural areas who could be provided assistance under various programmes of the Ministry. For the 10th Five Year Plan, the guidelines were issued for conducting the BPL Census 2002, however, its results have been delayed because of the stay order passed by the Supreme Court on 5.5.2003 while hearing the Writ Petition No.196 of 2001 in the matter of PUCL V/s Union of India. The State-wise details of number of BPL families identified through BPL Census 1997 are annexed.

(b): The Government is implementing various schemes for Poverty Alleviation such as Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY) to provide houses to BPL families, Swaranjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY) to provide subsidy to Below Poverty Line families for acquiring economic assets to set up self-employment, Total Sanitation Campaign to provide subsidy to the BPL families of the rural areas, Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana and National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, to provide employment, National Social Assistance Programme to provide financial assistance for old age pension and family benefit scheme. The PDS also provides subsidized foodgrains for identified BPL families, etc.

(c) to (d): The Ministry of Rural Development has not received any information regarding the large scale discrepancies in preparing the list of BPL families in some Districts of Assam. However, the Ministry has already prescribed detailed guidelines to prepare the BPL list in an objective and transparent manner which includes approval of the BPL list by the Gram Sabha in an open meeting and introduction of two-stage appeal mechanism to redress the grievances of the people, if any. It has also been advised that the printed copies of the BPL list have to be kept at the Panchayat Headquarters and also to be displayed on the notice boards and website.